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October 9, 2003

TO: Each Supervisor

FROM: Thomas L. Garthwaite, M.D.   
Director and Chief Medical Officer

Jonathan E. Fielding, M.D., M.P.H.   
Director of Public Health and Health Officer

**SUBJECT: EXOTIC NEWCASTLE DISEASE**

Attached for your information is a copy of the announcement by the U.S.D.A. and the California Department of Food and Agriculture of the end of the quarantine related to Exotic Newcastle Disease in the United States and in California. We will continue to offer the assistance of our Veterinary Public Health staff for ongoing monitoring.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please let either of us know.

TLG:jgh  
304:012

**Attachments**

c: Chief Administrative Officer  
County Counsel  
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors



CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

## NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release: Tuesday, September 16, 2003  
Release Number: CDFA03-060

**CALIFORNIA FREE OF EXOTIC NEWCASTLE DISEASE*****Statewide quarantine lifted***

SACRAMENTO - The California Department of Food and Agriculture and the U.S. Department of Agriculture have announced an end to the Exotic Newcastle Disease (END) quarantine. Extensive testing of the regulated area has been completed, with no additional detections of the disease.

The state and federal quarantines originally encompassed 46,000 square miles, which included the following counties: Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, Santa Barbara, San Bernardino, San Diego, Ventura, and a small southeastern corner of Kern County. On August 4, 2003, all but 7,300 square miles of the quarantine was released. This latest action lifts the entire quarantine in California, including the statewide poultry exhibition ban. However, CDFA retains the authority to monitor and test at poultry sale venues in an effort to prevent the introduction of highly contagious poultry diseases such as END.

"We have eagerly anticipated this day and are extremely proud of the tireless work of the Exotic Newcastle Disease Task Force," said CDFA Secretary William (Bill) J. Lyons, Jr. "We relied on the expertise of CDFA veterinarians and other staff, as well as veterinarians from the USDA and from Baja California. We also greatly appreciate the contributions from other state, federal and local agencies, and the state of the art capabilities of the California Animal Health and Food Safety Lab at the University of California. Many government agencies and thousands of people contributed to an expeditious and successful conclusion of this program."

The initial cases of Exotic Newcastle Disease were detected last fall. By winter, the disease had spread to commercial poultry operations in Southern California. In January, California Governor Gray Davis declared a state of emergency. The outbreak cost more than \$160 million to fight and resulted in the depopulation of more than 3 million birds.

To guard against the risk of subsequent outbreaks, especially in the high-risk fall months, CDFA has activated an ongoing monitoring program. All backyard poultry owners and commercial operations are encouraged to practice biosecurity measures to help prevent the introduction of disease when people enter or depart the premises, to routinely check birds for signs of illness, and to report any incidence of suspected END or other bird diseases. More information is available at [www.cdfa.ca.gov](http://www.cdfa.ca.gov) or through the END information line, 1-800-491-1899.

**Editors' Note-** CDFA and USDA representatives will be available via conference call at 3 p.m. today to discuss the lifting of the quarantine. The number is 1-866-453-9084. The pass code is 340726.

Suzan Holl (301) 734-6464  
Jerry Redding (202) 720-6959

## **USDA LIFTS QUARANTINE RESTRICTIONS FOR EXOTIC NEWCASTLE DISEASE IN CALIFORNIA**

WASHINGTON, Sept. 16, 2003 – The U.S. Department of Agriculture today announce that there are no longer any areas in the United States that are quarantined because of exotic Newcastle disease (END), a serious disease of poultry and other birds. While this is a major milestone in the fight to end what was a very serious avian disease outbreak, officials warn that continued precautions should be taken against the reintroduction of END.

Today's action removes portions of Kern, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino and Ventura counties, Calif., from the list of END quarantined areas. This means that restrictions are removed on the movement of birds, poultry and certain other articles from those areas. This action comes 11 months after END was verified in California.

END is one of the most infectious poultry diseases in the world. It is a contagious and fatal viral disease that affects the respiratory, nervous and digestive systems of all species of birds. The virus is spread primarily through direct contact between healthy birds and the bodily discharges of infected birds. The disease is transmitted through infected birds' droppings and secretions from the nose, mouth and eyes. END is not considered a public health threat.

USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) encourages bird owners to take biosecurity precautions and to report sick birds immediately to local animal health authorities.

This interim rule is scheduled for publication in the Sept. 19 Federal Register and was effective Sept. 16. APHIS documents published in the Federal Register and related information, including the names of organizations and individuals who have commented on APHIS dockets, are available on the Internet at <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/ppd/rad/webrepor.html>.

Consideration will be given to comments received on or before Nov. 18. Send an original and three copies of postal or commercial delivery comments to Docket No. 02-117-10, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, Station 3C71, 4700 River Road, Unit 118, Riverdale, Md. 20737-1238. If you use e-mail, address your comments to [regulations@aphis.usda.gov](mailto:regulations@aphis.usda.gov). Your comments must be contained in the body of the message; do not send attached files. Please include your name and address in the message and use "Docket No. 02-117-10" on the subject line.

Comments may be reviewed at USDA, Room 1141, South Building, 14th Street and Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C., between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays. Persons wishing to review comments are requested to call ahead on

(202) 690-2817 to facilitate entry into the comment reading room.

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Note to Reporters: USDA news releases, program announcements and media advisories are available on the Internet. Access the APHIS home page by pointing your Web browser to <http://www.aphis.usda.gov> and clicking on the "News" button. Also, anyone with an e-mail address can sign up to receive APHIS press releases automatically. Send an e-mail message to [majordomo@info.aphis.usda.gov](mailto:majordomo@info.aphis.usda.gov) and leave the subject blank. In the message, type: subscribe  
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